

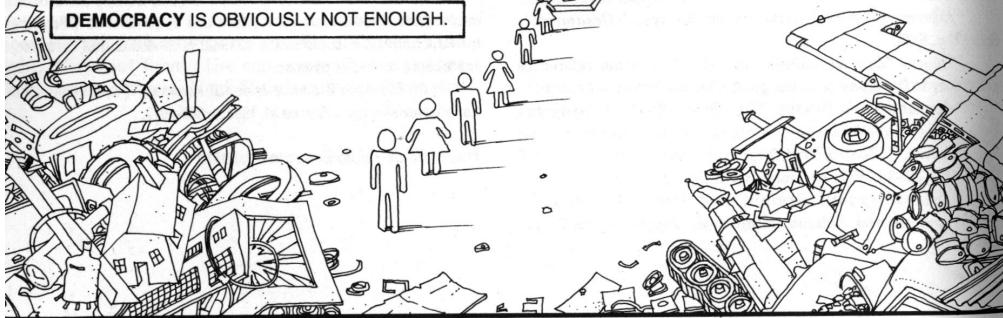
script:
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THE PARTY FOR AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION

DEMOCRACY IS OBVIOUSLY NOT ENOUGH.

art:
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THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MODEL OF THE DEMOCRATIC STATE OFFERS TO PROTECT ITS CITIZENS' INALIENABLE RIGHT TO THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. BUT HAPPINESS IS NOT THE ANSWER.

THE DEMAND PLACED UPON THE CITIZENS OF DEMOCRACY IS AT ONCE OBSCENE AND IMPOSSIBLE. IT IS THE MATERNAL SUPREMO'S IMPERATIVE TO "ENJOY."

"DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY." AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH, WE ARE ALSO ALWAYS COMMANDED TO "HAVE A NICE DAY." UNDER SUCH A TERRIFYINGLY "REASONABLE" STATE, WHICH SUPPOSEDLY WANTS ONLY THE BEST FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US, THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS IS A MORAL IMPERATIVE, AND ABJECTION ITSELF IS MADE ABJECT.



IT'S TIME TO IMAGINE A STATE THAT COULD PROTECT THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF ITS CITIZENS TO THE PURSUIT OF ABJECTION. **UNDER THE STATE OF AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION**, THE LOGIC OF DOMESTICATION AND ACCUMULATION COULD FINALLY BE SUPPLANTED BY A LOGIC OF INTENSITY AND SACRIFICE.



DEATH WOULD FIND A HONORABLE PLACE IN THE SYMBOLIC ORDER; AND, AS A CONSEQUENCE, LIFE COULD BE LIVED WITH DIGNITY, RATHER THAN CLUNG TO OUT OF FEAR.

AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION FOR ALL, UNDER MANY GODS, MULTIFARIOUS AND INFINITELY DIVISIBLE. ONLY UNDER SUCH A REGIME COULD WE BE TRULY FREE AND EQUAL BUT DIFFERENT.

UNDER SUCH A STATE, **FREE** FROM THE IMPERATIVE TO PURSUE HAPPINESS, OUR RELATION TO THE **OTHER** WOULD **NOT** HAVE TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE OPTIMISTIC AND SENTIMENTALIZED TERMS OF ENLIGHTENMENT HUMANISM. THE RELATION TO THE OTHER COULD FINALLY BE ACCURATELY BE REPRESENTED AS CHARACTERIZED BY AGGRESSION, JEALOUSY, AND FEAR.

MULTICULTURALISM

TODAY OUR
BEST SHOT AT
PEACEFUL
CO-EXISTENCE
WITH THE OTHER
IS A KIND OF
MIND-NUMBING
MUTUAL
IDENTIFICATION.

MUTUAL
RECOGNITION
TAKES PLACE
ONLY AS
MUTUAL
CANNIBALISM
OR
MUTUAL
INCORPORATION.

OH I LOVE
SO-AND-SO,
HE-SHE-IT IS JUST
LIKE ME. OH I KNOW
JUST HOW YOU
FEEL. I'VE BEEN
THERE BEFORE.

THAT HAPPENED
TO ME. I HATE IT
WHEN THAT
HAPPENS. I'M
SO SORRY.
I LOVE YOU.
YOU WANT
WHAT I WANT.



THAT MEANS YOU'RE
JUST LIKE ME.
DIFFERENCE, ABSO-
LUTE AND TERRIFYING,
SEEMS DEADLY TO
THOSE OF US SO
ACCUSTOMED...

...TO BEING CODDLED BY FRIENDLY
SAMENESS AND HOMOGENEITY.
DIFFERENCE UNDER THE PRESENT
CONDITIONS IS WHOLLY
INTOLERABLE.

THE NEW MULTICULTURAL
AGENDA IS MERELY A COVERUP
FOR FURTHERING SAMENESS
UNDER AN OFFICIAL
UMBRELLA...

...IN AN IMAGINARY MATERNAL MUSEUM
IN WHICH ALL CULTURES WOULD SOMEHOW
BECOME DOMESTICATED AND EQUIVA-
LENT, THAT IS EQUALLY
LOVABLE TO FUNDERS.



UNDER MULTICULTURALISM,
DIFFERENCE IS QUICKLY AND
EFFECTIVELY BUREAUCRATIZED.
IN THE ARTS, MULTICULTURALISM
IS PROMOTED NOW AT THE
EXPENSE OF A NEW CULTURAL
SCAPEGOAT -- OBSCENITY.
WHAT IS CALLED "OBSCENITY"
IN ART HAS BECOME THE BLACK
SHEEP OF OUR CULTURAL
FAMILY, THE UNWANTED, THE
CAST OFF, THE ABJECT. WE
CAN ALL BE ONE BIG HAPPY
MULTI-CULTURAL FAMILY, AS
LONG AS NO ONE GETS
OBSCENE, IN WHICH CASE, HE
OR SHE WILL GET THE
BOOT AS WELL.



THIS SYSTEM MERELY
GUARANTEES THAT THERE WILL ALWAYS
BE ONE OTHER WHOSE DIFFERENCE
IS UNASSIMILABLE AND
UNBEARABLE. OUTSIDE THE FIELD
OF OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT
FUNDING, HOWEVER, IN THE
COMMERCIAL CULTURAL SPHERES,
BAD BOYS ACT OUT AGAINST
THE OFFICIAL LINES, AGAINST
OBSCENITY, AND RECEIVE
SYMBOLIC REWARDS IN THE
FORMS OF ATTENTION
AND MONEY.



LICENSE TO BE BAD
STILL SEEMS TO REMAIN
RESERVED FOR
WHITE MALES.



...FOR THE FEW PLACES RESERVED
FOR THEM IN THE PANTHEON OF THE
BAD, MINORITIES TAKE BIGGER
RISKS WHEN THEY ACT OUT



ACTING OUT AND BEING
BAD IS A PRIVILEGE WHICH
CAN NO LONGER BE
RESERVED FOR THE
WHITE MALE.

THE NEW WORLD ORDER, OR, MORE OF THE SAME

HOW REASSURED WE WERE WHEN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION COLLAPSED IN ONE YEAR.

OH, THEY ARE JUST LIKE US... THEY WANT WHAT WE WANT.

... THEIR LACK IS OUR LACK IS OUR DESIRE IS THEIR DESIRE ...

THE PROBLEM OF DIFFERENCE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DISPOSED OF SATISFACTORILY...

THAT IS, IN OUR FAVOR...

IN RELATION TO WHAT WAS ONCE THE SOVIET BLOC.

WHAT WE DESIRE AND WHAT WE LACK IS AFFIRMED AND SUPPORTED BY THE OTHER'S CAPITULATION.

NOW THEY MAY PURSUE OUR FORMS OF HAPPINESS

FORMS OF HAPPINESS...

... ARE ALWAYS REACTIVE AND LIMITED...

... IN POST-INDUSTRIAL, DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY,

... TO FORMS OF CONSUMPTION ...

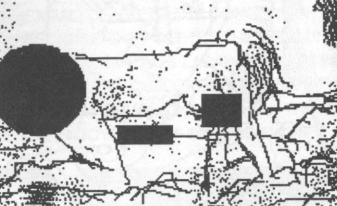
... AND COMMODITY RECOGNITION, THAT IS, RECOGNITION FOR AND BY COMMODITIES.

THE AFFIRMATION OF THE ABJECT, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS INFINITE AND PURE POSITIVITY.

REACTIVE FORMS DRAW UPON THE LIMITLESS POWER OF THE ABJECT...

... BY REACTING AGAINST IT, DENYING IT.

THE REACTIVE FORM IS NEVERTHELESS POWERFUL BECAUSE OF ITS DIRECT ADDRESS OF THE ABJECT. THE AFFIRMATION OF ABJECTION PRODUCES FORCE AND INTENSITY. MARX'S PRIVILEGING OF...



THE PROLETARIAT AS THE MOST POTENT FORCE OF HISTORY HAS TO DO WITH THE PROLETARIAT'S...



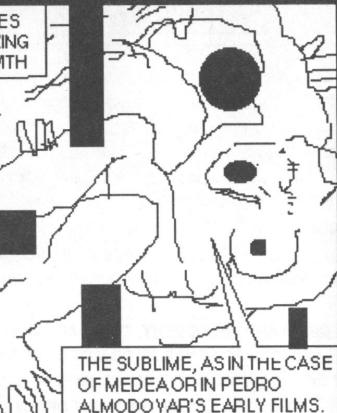
... POTENTIAL AFFIRMATION OF ABJECTION WITH WHICH IT IS SO INTIMATE. OBSCENITY AND MELODRAMA ARE BOTH COMPONENTS OF AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION IN...



THE REPRESENTATIONAL FIELD. NOT ALL FORMS OF OBSCENITY OR MELODRAMA IN ART, HOWEVER, ARE AFFIRMATIVE.

REACTIVE OBSCENITY IS OBSESSED WITH TABOO BREAKING AND THEREFORE, IN NEGATING A NEGATIVE, SUCCEEDS ONLY IN AFFIRMING THE TABOO ITSELF.

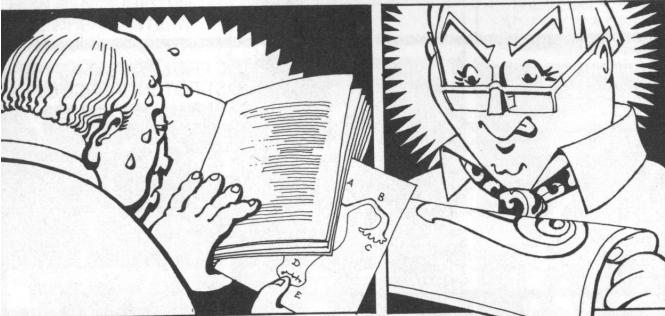
MELODRAMA WHICH DOES NOT FALL INTO MORALIZING MARRIES THE ABJECT WITH



BECAUSE WE EXIST UNDER THE TYRANNICAL AND OPPRESSIVE IDEALS OF REASON, OUR FORMS OF ACTING OUT AGAINST AUTHORITY ARE, OF COURSE, INCREASINGLY IDIOSYNCRATIC, PRIVATIZED, PERVERSE AND ECCENTRIC AND MEDIATED.

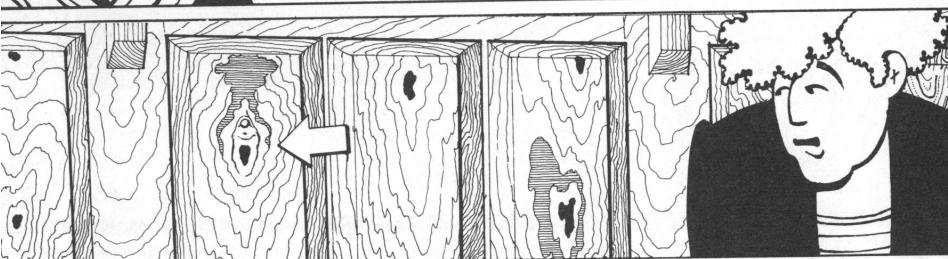
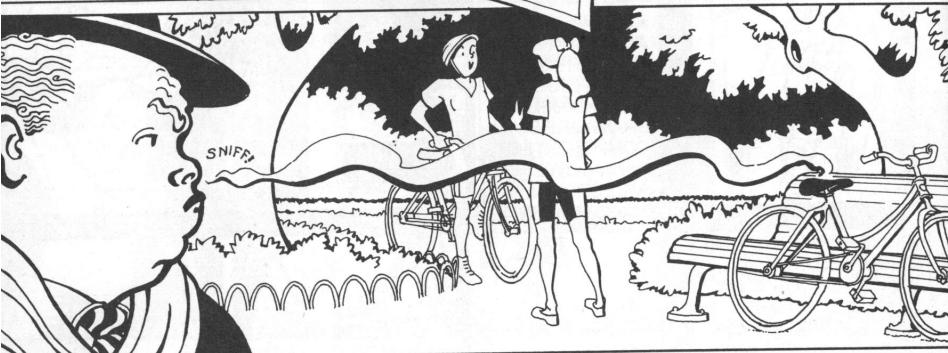
THE SUBLIME, AS IN THE CASE OF MEDEA OR IN PEDRO ALMODOVAR'S EARLY FILMS.

CENSORSHIP AND ENJOYMENT



CENSORS ENJOY THE DISPLAY OF OBSCENE ARTIFACTS AND THE REPETITION OF OBJECTIONABLE PHRASES FOUND IN GOVERNMENT-FUNDED SHOWS AND ART PUBLICATIONS.

THESE CENSORS ARE, IN FACT, PARTICIPATING IN THE INHERENTLY JOYFUL NATURE OF AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION. THEY ENJOY LOCATING FORMS OF OBSCENITY. WHAT IF WE ALL BEGAN TO AVAIL OURSELVES OF THAT KIND OF ENJOYMENT?



WHAT IF A CRITICAL MASS OF AMERICANS BEGAN TO ISOLATE INSTANCES OF OBJECTS, PHRASES, AND IMAGES, BOTH AESTHETIC AND NON/AESTHETIC, WHICH THEY FOUND OFFENSIVE, AND DENOUNCED THEM PUBLICLY? WHAT IF WE ALL PERFORMED THE ENJOYABLE ROLE OF THE CENSOR (THIS IS DISGUSTING, LOOK AT THIS, THIS IS OFFENSIVE, LISTEN TO THIS, THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE)? WHAT IF WE BEGAN TO FOCUS ON THIS PLEASURE AND TO DEMOCRATIZE IT, MAKING, AS THE CENSORS DO, OBJECTS OF ENJOYMENT OUT OF OBJECTS OF OFFENSE? WE COULD DEMAND A TELEVISION CHANNEL DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO THE VENTILATION OF OUR NATIONAL DISGUST AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS. WE COULD ALL GET OUR FIFTEEN MINUTES OF ENJOYMENT AND MEDIA ATTENTION. OBJECTS AND IMAGES OF OFFENSE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PRODUCED AND FUNDED SO THAT WE COULD CONTINUE TO ENJOY OUR APPROBATION OF THEM.

GILLES DELEUZE WRITES IN NIETZSCHE AND PHILOSOPHY, "ONLY ACTIVE FORCE ASSERTS ITSELF, IT AFFIRMS ITS DIFFERENCE AND MAKES ITS DIFFERENCE AN OBJECT OF ENJOYMENT AND AFFIRMATION. REACTIVE FORCE, EVEN WHEN IT OBEYS, LIMITS ACTIVE FORCE, IMPOSES LIMITATIONS AND PARTIAL RESTRICTIONS ON IT AND IS ALREADY CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE NEGATIVE."

WHEN A CONSERVATIVE CENSOR LOOKS AT AN IMAGE OF A PENIS, WHAT HE SEES IS THE HOMOEROTIC GAZE ON THAT IMAGE. THE FACT THAT THE CENSOR HAS SEEN THE GAZE OF THE OTHER (HERE THE MALE HOMOSEXUAL) LEADS TO THE CONCLUSION: "THEY (HOMOSEXUALS) DESIRE IT (THE PENIS) BECAUSE THEY SEE IT." THE CENSOR HAS LOCATED THE OBJECT OF DESIRE OF THE OTHER. JACQUES LACAN IN *LES PSYCHOSES* SAYS THAT "THE OBJECT OF HUMAN INTEREST IS THE OBJECT OF DESIRE OF THE OTHER." WHAT IS OF INTEREST TO THE CENSOR IS PRECISELY WHAT THEY THINK THE OTHER DESIRES. THE CENSOR CANNOT LEAVE THE ENJOYMENT OF OTHERS ALONE.

THE RIGHT-WING CENSOR RAISES THE QUESTION OF FUNDING ART THAT IS OBSCENE, OFFENSIVE, OR INCOMPREHENSIBLE AS MOST AMERICANS ARE FEELING THE ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS OF OUR TIME. IT'S A WASTE OF OUR HARDEARNED TAX DOLLARS.





THE LIBERAL RESPONSE TO THE RIGHT WING'S STRATEGIES IS NO LONGER SUFFICIENT. THE LIBERAL BELIEVES IN A HUMANISTIC, JUSTICE FOR ALL KIND OF STATE.



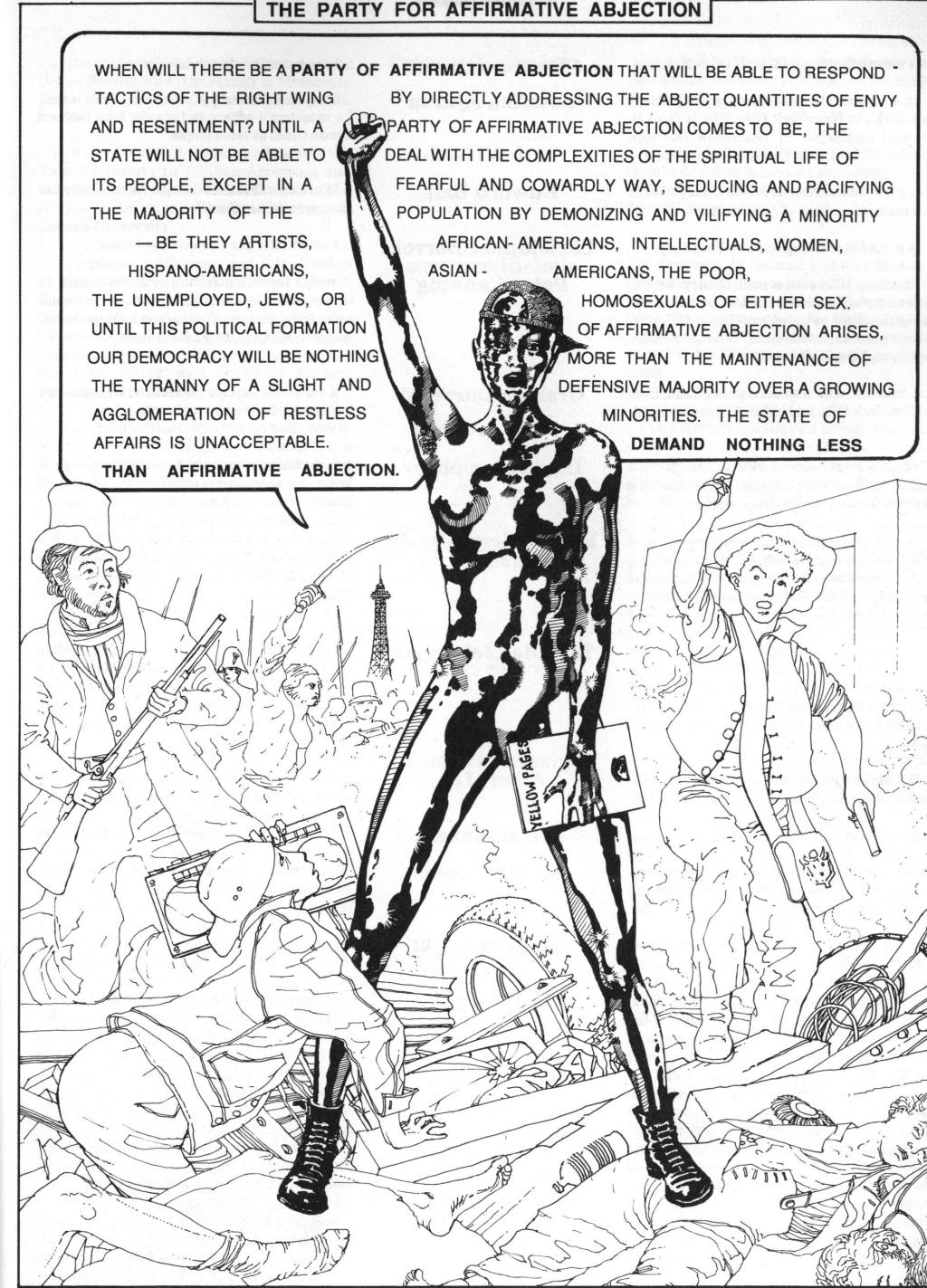
THE LIBERAL WILL TRY TO REASON -- WHEREAS THE RIGHT WING HAS GONE WAY BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF REASON.



THE LIBERAL WILL NOT DEAL WITH AFFIRMATIONS OR NEGATIONS OF ABJECTION. THE LIBERAL IS TRAPPED BY A BUREAUCRATIC RHETORIC...



... OF WHICH EVERYONE IS SUSPICIOUS.



THE PARTY FOR AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION

WHEN WILL THERE BE A PARTY OF AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION THAT WILL BE ABLE TO RESPOND TO THE TACTICS OF THE RIGHT WING BY DIRECTLY ADDRESSING THE ABJECT QUANTITIES OF ENVY AND RESENTMENT? UNTIL A STATE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF FEARFUL AND COWARDLY WAY, SEDUCING AND PACIFYING POPULATION BY DEMONIZING AND VILIFYING A MINORITY AFRICAN-AMERICANS, INTELLECTUALS, WOMEN, ASIAN-AMERICANS, THE POOR, HOMOSEXUALS OF EITHER SEX. OF AFFIRMATIVE ABJECTION ARISES, MORE THAN THE MAINTENANCE OF DEFENSIVE MAJORITY OVER A GROWING MINORITIES. THE STATE OF DEMAND NOTHING LESS